

Grace Notes

Newsletter of Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia

Rector's Reflections

The Passion and the Glory

The first 23 days of April this year continue the holy season of Lent. Traditionally, Sundays are not numbered among the 40 days of fasting and abstinence. Technically, exactly half of Lent will be in April. So we still have time to “*prepare with joy for the Paschal feast...*” (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 346). I think the most joyful preparation we can experience is in the full observance of Holy Week, of Our Lord's Passion and Glory.

Palm Sunday combines the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem with the dramatic reading of his crucifixion story. The darkness and power of evil is very real as the congregation cries out, “*Let him be crucified.*” On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday we celebrate the Holy Eucharist and remember Jesus' last days in Jerusalem, including Judas' betrayal.

The gathering darkness is symbolically expressed at Choral Tenebrae on Wednesday night. One tiny candle shines at the end, helping us to know Christ's light shines on.

The three sacred days or “*Triduum Sacrum*” (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday) are actually one continuous liturgy. The new commandment to love, celebrated in the institution of the Eucharist on Thursday, brings us to the cross on Friday and the empty tomb on Saturday night.

In 1995, I had the opportunity to spend Monday of Holy Week through Easter morning in the monastery of the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, MA. Brother Curtis and I recalled the experience during his recent visit to Grace. During my week at the monastery, I felt carried through the experiences of Our Lord's Passion. And then, at the Great Vigil, beginning before dawn on Easter Sunday, I came once again to know Christ's victory over death.

Our liturgies at Grace can carry us through the experiences of sharing in Christ's Passion and Glory. The beauty of holiness in our worship, in our music, in the stone and light of the church fill us with the reality of Christ's saving love.

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April 2011

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Worship Schedule

Sunday Schedule

Holy Eucharist Rite I 7:30 am
Child Care 8:45 am – 12:45 pm
La Santa Eucaristía 9:00 am
Choral Eucharist Rite II 9:00 am
Christian Ed classes 10:15 am
Choral Eucharist Rite I 11:15 am
Holy Eucharist Rite II 5:00 pm

Weekday Eucharist through April 15

Mondays, Rite II 6:30 pm
Tuesdays, Rite II with healing... 6:30 pm
Wednesdays, Rite I 7:00 am
Thursdays, Rite I 12:15 pm
Fridays, Rite II with

Stations of the Cross 12:15 pm

Holy Week (April 18–22) last page

Weekday Eucharist beginning April 26

Tuesdays, Rite II with healing... 6:30 pm
Wednesdays, Rite I 7:00 am
Thursdays, Rite I 12:15 pm

Grace Church is:

- ❖ A center for worship and fellowship
- ❖ A school for discipleship and stewardship
- ❖ A community for healing and outreach

About Grace Notes

Grace Notes is published 10 times a year by Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia – monthly except for combined July/August and December/January issues. The deadline for submitting copy is midnight on the 15th of the preceding month.

The next *Grace Notes* deadline is April 15th for the May issue. Articles should be submitted by e-mail to grace.notes@gracealex.org. All articles are subject to editing.

Grace Church's newsletter team includes Doug Prince (editor), Amy Barron, Gary Carter, Kristine Hesse, June Huber and Beth Wiggers.

The Passion and the Glory *(continued from page 1)*

I deeply appreciate the ministries of so many who serve so that we might share in this glorious worship: the altar guild, our acolytes, the choirs, our LEMs, lectors and ushers. We are blessed by all they do for us during Holy Week and Easter.

May our celebration of the Passion and Glory of Christ be a blessing to you and to all who share this holy time with us at Grace.

Grace, peace and love,
— The Rev. Robert H. Malm

Vacation Bible School 2011

Our Vacation Bible School (VBS) will begin on Monday, July 11, and continue through Friday, July 15. Each day begins at 9:00 am and concludes at 1:00 pm for those attending half-day and at 5:00 pm for those attending full day. VBS is for everyone from age three (and potty trained) through all those who have completed fifth grade. If you have completed sixth grade or beyond, we hope you will consider applying as a counselor-in-training.

This year's VBS will again be in partnership with Christ Church, Alexandria and will take place here at Grace Church. Our curriculum will focus on the Beatitudes and will include music, worship, art, drama, storytelling, film, cooking ... and SO much more.

We are having a lot of fun preparing this VBS program and are delighted to share it with you and your children. As you might imagine, we offer many opportunities for family and care-givers to participate in VBS, too. Our expectation is that you will find at least one, if not several ways to volunteer and contribute to VBS 2011 being a joyful success. We look forward to your vital support of this exciting ministry.

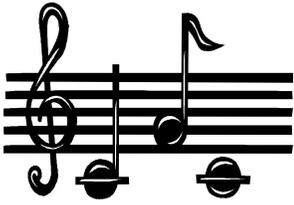
Registration opens on April 1 – space is limited so sign up as soon as possible!

Jolyn Knapp, Family Ministry Coordinator at Christ Church, Alexandria, joins me in warmly welcoming you to our VBS family.

— Julie Simonton, Assistant for Family Ministries

Music Notes

Music for Choir, Organ and Orchestra



On Sunday, April 10 at 6:00 pm, members of the choirs of Grace Church, St. Martin Lutheran Church (Annapolis, MD) and Covenant United Methodist Church (Montgomery Park, MD) join forces to present Gabriel Fauré's sublime Requiem. Tim Smith will conduct the choirs and orchestra, Thom Robertson will be organist, and Tom Andrew (Covenant UMC Director of Music) will be the baritone soloist. Also included on the program will be a work by Ralph Vaughan Williams and several of W. A. Mozart's Epistle Sonatas for organ and strings. There is no admission charge, but a free-will offering will be received to help offset expenses.

Choral Tenebrae

Wednesday, April 20 at 7:30 pm, we will present a sung service of Tenebrae for the Wednesday of Holy Week. The service of Tenebrae ("shadows") is a traditional part of the rites of Holy Week. Interspersed among readings from the book of Lamentations, the choir will chant settings of psalms and present anthems in response. The service is candle-lit; throughout the service candles are extinguished until the church is dark - symbolizing the coming solemnities of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The service is sung completely a cappella.

— Thom Robertson, Director of Music

Graceful Worship

Why do we call it "Good" Friday?

As early as the first century, the Church set aside every Friday as a special day of prayer and fasting. It was not until the fourth century, however, that the Church began observing the Friday before Easter as the day associated with the crucifixion of Christ. First called "Holy Friday" or "Great Friday" by the Greek Church, the observation on this day was adopted by the Roman Church somewhere between the fourth and seventh century (sources differ widely on this).

The phrase "Good Friday" doesn't appear in the Bible and neither does the word "Friday." (The only day of the week given a name in the Bible is the seventh day, the Sabbath. The other days are designated as the first, second, third and so on.) So why do we call the day that Christ was crucified "Good" Friday? The logical assumption is that Christ's sacrifice for us was a good thing – and it certainly was! But there's more to the story.

The origin of the term is not clear. Some say it is from "God's Friday" (*Gottes Freitag*). Others maintain that it is from the German *Gute Freitag*. The day was sometimes called "Long Friday" by the Anglo-Saxons. But if Good Friday was called good because English adopted the German phrase, then we would expect *Gute Freitag* to be the common German name for Good Friday, and it isn't. Instead, Germans refer to Good Friday as *Karfreitag*, which means "Lamentation Friday."

Other countries refer to this day with different terms. In the Holy Land, Greece, many eastern European countries and Indonesia, Good Friday is known as "Great Friday." In countries where Romance languages are spoken (such as France, Italy and Spain) it is often called "Holy Friday." In Armenia it is called "High Friday," in Sweden it is called "Long Friday," in Russia it is called "Passion Friday" and in Chinese it is called the "Day of Christ's Suffering." Some people also call it "Black Friday" after the color of the day's vestments.

I choose to believe that Good Friday is good because the death of Christ, as terrible as it was, led to the Resurrection on Easter Sunday, which brought new life to all of us. Or, as one Internet blogger put it, "It was good because it was God's provision for those of us who are not."

— June Huber

Growing @ Grace

Upcoming Opportunities for Children, Youth and Parents

Friday, April 1: J2A Lock-In – No April Fools

The J2A group finally has a date set for our first official lock-in. This will be an adult-sponsored, overnight event combining fun and spiritual activities for our group.

April 1-3 at Shrine Mont

Parish Youth Ministry (PYM) Senior High Weekend. Keynote speakers are youth leaders from the Diocese of Christ the King in South Africa. Go out for loads of jam-packed fun and inspiration. Cost is \$150 per person (scholarships are available through the Diocese).

Sunday, April 3, at 10:15 am – Parent Forum / Adult Forum: Teaching Children to Pray, with the Rev. Heather VanDeventer and the Rev. Dr. David Gortner

All Grace parishioners are invited to consider how we as parents, grandparents, godparents and a parish family teach our children to communicate with God. And, of course, teaching children to pray means knowing how to pray ourselves. Join Heather and David, who are priests, educators, husband and wife, and Mom and Dad. Don't forget our new Percolate Your Faith coffee bar, too.

Sunday, April 3, at 5:30 pm – EYC Dinner and Fellowship

The J2A will still be recovering from their lock-in, so Sunday evening will be a special time for our EYC to enjoy the evening together.

Mondays, April 4 and April 11, are Popcorn Theology Nights

Come and explore how Hollywood takes the Bible to the animated silver screen through the ever-popular *Veggie Tales: The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything*. The series is geared toward grade school kids and will begin immediately after the Lenten simple supper.

Sunday, April 17, at 10:15 am – Palm Sunday Intergenerational Event

Join your parish family for fellowship and crafts in the Merrow Hall auditorium. Learn how to fold your palms into crosses, make butterflies and so much more.

Friday, April 22, at 6:00 pm – Children's Good Friday Service

Our Good Friday service for children is an interactive liturgy for children, parents and anyone who enjoys vibrant worship. All are welcome to participate in the *Story of the Garden* and walk the Stations of the Cross.

Saturday, April 23, at 10:00 am - J2A'ers are the Grace Easter Bunny

Join your fellow J2A'ers in the Merrow Hall Auditorium and Kitchen to prepare for Sunday's Easter Egg Hunt. We'll die eggs and assemble Easter bags for all the Grace and La Gracia kiddies. Come for the fun!!!

Sunday, April 24, at 10:15 am - Easter Egg Hunt

Participate in the simple joy of church fellowship and a traditional Easter egg hunt in the Merrow Hall Auditorium.

Coffee Bar & Parent Forums: Percolate Your Faith!

Do you enjoy the taste of the coffee at the local coffee pub on Sunday mornings? Save your cash for the offering plate and enjoy a tasty cup in the St. John room during our Parent Forum / Adult Forum on April 3. Contact family.ministries@gracealex.org for more information or to volunteer to host this fun new offering.

Contact family.ministries@gracealex.org for information on all things related to children, youth and parents.

Eco-Notes

Recently one of my colleagues on the Environmental Committee asked me what Eco-City Alexandria means. While I gave a reasonably coherent answer, I figured this could bear more research.

“Eco-Cities are places where people can live healthier and economically productive lives while reducing their impact on the environment. They work to harmonize existing policies, regional realities, and economic and business markets with their natural resources and environmental assets. Eco-Cities strive to engage all citizens in collaborative and transparent decision making, while being mindful of social equity concerns.”

Eco-City Alexandria is a collaborative planning process designed by the City of Alexandria in partnership with Virginia Tech’s Department of Urban Affairs and Planning. The initiative is primarily coordinated through the city’s Environmental Policy Commission (EPC). With citizen input the two groups formulated a charter that the city adopted in 2009. The Environmental Action Plan (EAP) now acts as a city wide guidance plan for Sustainability in Alexandria until the year 2030.

“Sustainability is progress that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. More specifically, sustainability is equally a policy framework and a process that offers a new way of harmonizing economic, environmental and quality of life principles and goals. Sustainability is also a constantly evolving journey that institutions and individuals will take at different speeds and adapt in different ways.”

Through citizen input and guidance, the 2030 plan embraced goals that cover many areas: Transportation, Green Building, Air and Water Quality, Environment and Health, Energy Use, Land Use, Emerging Threats and, of course, Implementation. An action timeline cuts through the fine print. In 2010 the EAP called for the city to purchase 5% of its energy via green certificates. By 2030 the amount will be 50%. Other significant events on the timeline note that new buildings in 2030 will be carbon neutral. By 2015 the city wants all plantings on city property to be non-invasive species and to incorporate native plants.

For those of us who live in Alexandria, the EAP provides opportunities to watch how our city moves into the future. Do we meet the goals so bravely set out? For our parish, the EAP and the Eco-City Initiative can offer insights about what our city will be asking us to do and how to adapt to the changes happening around us.

For more information about Eco-City Alexandria, visit <http://alexandriava.gov/Eco-City> or the website at Virginia Tech, <http://ecocity.ncr.vt.edu/index.html> and click on Environmental Action Plan.

— Jennifer Eckel

From the Parish Register

Baptisms:

- Melanie Noemy Farciert, daughter of Fernando Farciert Espinoza and Glenda Farciert
- Bibi Ahza Hallim, adult
- William Douglas Holland, son of David and Kathy Holland
- Austyn Grace Schmitz, daughter of Matthew and Gillian Schmitz

Requiem Eucharists:

- Jerry Horwitz, husband of Caroline Bailey-Horwitz
- Samantha Taylor, niece of Joyce Stancil

Haiti is Alive

It's almost impossible to go to Haiti and not think constantly of Matthew 25:31-46 and serving "*the least of these.*" Rubble still lines the street of Port au Prince; the Episcopal Cathedral is in ruins; vendors have set up stands in front of demolished buildings, because they have to have a business; and people drink whatever water they can get, even if it's not clean, because they can't afford bottled. Many people can't work because there's no industry and thus few jobs to be had, so many people are doing day work just to get by. If these are not the least, who possibly could be?

Through the generosity of this congregation, we were able to travel with a group of young adults from the Diocese of Virginia to Haiti. We flew in and out of Port au Prince, but the majority of our time was spent in Gonaives and Bayonnais – two cities that were largely impacted by the hurricanes back in 2008. There, we worked with Père Max, the local Episcopal priest, at two of his schools. We went to build relationships, establish connections, and lay a foundation for a partnership between the Diocese of Virginia and the Diocese of Haiti that will hopefully span many years and young adults from around the Diocese. Although our main goal was not physical but emotional construction, we also funded and assisted in the construction of a computer lab. It was a relief to sweat and have something to measure our successes. However, in a trip built around intangibles, it was the relationships – and not the computer lab – that made the lasting impressions.

It's amazing to see how little the language barrier matters when you really want to communicate with someone – especially children, who were so tolerant of our butchered French and non-existent Creole! It was great to see that the schools were run very similarly to the schools here (they have structured lesson plans and homework) and that the kids acted just as kids do



(playing hand games and sports at recess, wanting to take pictures and pose with our cameras, goofing around and excited to find out who these visitors are and why they are there). We were fortunate to be able to spend so much time at the Gonaives school and to begin to bond with the children and young adults of Gonaives.



It was very difficult knowing that many of these kids may only get their one meal at the school, and not knowing what their home situation was or if they had electricity and clean water at home. We know we have poverty in the US, and that there are a lot of kids who don't have the best home life. It hit home in Haiti, especially when we would see the streets flooded with teenagers studying and doing homework under a street lamp because they don't have electricity at home.

Some of the first words we heard our first Sunday home at Grace: "*...But as servants of God, we have commended ourselves in every way. We are treated as imposters, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.*" (2 Cor. 6:4a, 8b-10)

When people ask how our trip was, the only way to describe it is surreal. We had an amazing time building relationships and helping our fellow Episcopalians in Haiti. However, it is very difficult to describe how we felt coming back, knowing how fortunate we are in the states, and not knowing if our friends in Haiti will get sick from cholera, if they will be able to receive enough donations for all of the students to continue with classes, or even know when their next meal may be.

Haiti is alive, and her people have made our lives richer. Many of them have what we would consider nothing – they are the least of these. But what the people we met do have is more than the material items; they have faith, hope, love and an incredible sense of charity. Many people have lost everything, their country is in ruins, but they are not Godforsaken and they are not hopeless. We now know Haiti, and we can never treat the people of Haiti as unknown again. These are our neighbors, and they need us to love them like ourselves and help them as we do our local neighbors and family. We strongly encourage everyone to participate in a mission trip at least once; it has changed our lives in more ways than we can describe and has definitely helped us grow spiritually and emotionally.

— Joy A. St John and Kendall Metz



Outreach

Carpenter's Shelter

Carpenter's Shelter receives about 19 percent of the entire Grace Outreach budget, with 84 cents of every dollar going directly into its programs. Our monetary support is in addition to the meals provided to the shelter by our parishioners. As one of the largest homeless programs in Northern Virginia, the shelter provides free, comprehensive services to more than 1,000 children, families and adults. It is a nationally recognized Center of Learning that teaches life skills and financial education, preparing clients to live independently. The Shelter provides more than \$5,000 in free prescription and medical services to the uninsured homeless. Since November, 135 individuals were provided safe overnight shelter. Ninety percent of shelter graduates who enroll into the Shelter Aftercare program and receive continued support and services do not return to homelessness. Overall 1,764 volunteers provide more than 31,000 hours of service. If you want to be a part of this local dynamic program, contact karen.wires@gracealex.org for more information.

The Outreach Committee volunteers prepare and serve dinner four times a year. Jobs are divided into purchasing, preparation in the Grace kitchen and finishing the preparations and serving at the Shelter. During the week before the scheduled dinner, two of our volunteers shop for the groceries. On the Sunday before the scheduled dinner, five or six parishioners gather in the church kitchen to chop vegetables, wash pans and put three large casseroles together – two meat and one vegetarian. This prep work takes place during the hour between the 9:00 and 11:15 am services. The casseroles are put together, covered with tin foil and placed in the refrigerators until Tuesday when one volunteer picks them up, along with the other groceries that have been stored in the kitchen, and drives them to the shelter.

Volunteers bake the casseroles, make salad, heat the vegetables (we have a secret ingredient for green beans), slice and butter bread or rolls, and place dessert, usually cookies or cake, on platters at the shelter. Dinner is served at 6:30 pm, and we usually finish clean up and are ready to leave by 7:30 pm. The two hours at the shelter, the hour on Sunday and the time spent purchasing the groceries are all the time it takes to prepare dinner and feed the 60 to 70 people who are staying at the shelter that day. This is a fast-paced and fun way to help people who need, really need, our help; it is also a way to get to know a few of our fellow parishioners that we might not see very often.

— Barbara Read and Karen Wires

ALIVE! Furniture Ministry

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" (Isaiah 6:8)

This passage is recited by the membership at the end of every ALIVE! meeting. And it truly describes the commitment of the leadership of that organization. Many of the people in leadership roles have been involved there for more than twenty years.

ALIVE! stands for Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically. It is a volunteer-run organization sponsored and supported by forty-one churches in the city of Alexandria. Ninety percent of the funds collected by ALIVE! go directly into programs to feed, house, and educate the poor in our city. While ALIVE! does have some paid employees in places such as the Child Development Center and at ALIVE House (their emergency housing facility), most of their programs, such as food distribution and delivery, household goods distribution and furniture delivery depend on volunteers from the participating church communities.

Grace Church has participated in the ALIVE! furniture distribution program for more than twenty years, supplying teams of volunteers on two Saturday mornings every April. This year, Grace is responsible for supplying volunteers on April 2 and 23. No experience is necessary. The operation involves picking up furniture from donors' homes, loading it into a van, and then transporting and off-loading the cargo at the residences of needy families. It usually takes three to four hours on a Saturday morning. If you think you would like to serve in this ministry, please contact Jeff Solsby at 703-548-2765.

— Kevin Sherlock

College and Military Easter Care Packages

On Palm Sunday, April 17, make signing a card to a Grace college student or parishioner serving abroad part of your intergenerational activities in the auditorium. Follow the march of the rubber ducky “missionaries” and bring some small fun items or nonperishable snacks to include in our Easter / pre-exam “Grace Cares” packages.

Following the changes made in the Fall, we will again use the Small Flat Rate Priority Mail boxes (about the size of a bestseller hardback) that cost less (\$5.20 vs. \$10.95 for medium boxes) and often arrive faster. We still have nearly 40 packages to mail, plus another 10 local college and grad students, so costs add up. Our global Grace family includes parishioners deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan; others serving with their families in Beijing, Oman, Sri Lanka, Moscow and Germany; a Peace Corps volunteer in Togo, West Africa; and students in the UK, Japan and throughout the United States.

It’s great to stay in touch with all these friends and family, so please think about what you’d like to contribute: snacks, a small toy or a check to help defray mailing costs. Questions, donations, volunteers, please contact Nancy Robinson at nancy.robinson@gracealex.org or 703-812-0292.



— Nancy Robinson

April Birthdays

4/1	Lenore Funkhouser	4/8	Keith Dobbs	4/19	Lindsey Malm
4/1	John Gnorski	4/8	Barbara Ebersole	4/20	Sasha Karamyshev
4/1	Joseph Madigan	4/8	Brittany Murchison	4/21	Barbara Morris
4/1	John Metz	4/9	Fred Saalfeld	4/21	Michelle Thissell
4/1	Bernie Schroeder	4/10	Franklin Reuther	4/21	June Ward
4/2	Page Tazewell	4/10	Mary Stewart	4/22	Amelia Pattarini
4/3	Sean Kelly	4/10	Jenny Wolff	4/22	Ashton Summers
4/3	Nancy Lorentz	4/11	William Gillette	4/23	Adam Doelp
4/3	Lexie Robinson	4/11	Bailey Griffin	4/24	Peter Iovino
4/3	Matthew Schmitz	4/11	Ana Sosa	4/25	Evan Dobbs
4/4	Stephen Falatko	4/13	Key Butcher	4/26	Gabriella Falcon
4/5	Jennifer Chriss	4/13	Sofia Dimick	4/26	Jonathan Lewallen
4/5	David Glazier	4/14	April Everett	4/26	Ellen Rugaber
4/5	Lynette Kamakura	4/15	Gary Warner	4/27	David Ebersole
4/5	Christopher Koelbl	4/16	Lisa Bellantoni	4/28	William Martin
4/6	Rachel Crabtree	4/16	Khacki Berry	4/28	Avery Meeks
4/6	Cammie Griffin	4/16	Sarah Westenhaver	4/28	Donna Plunkett
4/6	Mary Ann Ryan	4/17	Molly Sim	4/28	Richard Smith
4/6	Harvey Winter	4/17	John Thompson	4/29	Mary Barnes
4/6	Conway Zeigler	4/17	Mary Wallace	4/29	Katherine Kellogg
4/7	Phil Hickok	4/18	Brian Foucart	4/29	Suzi Pease
4/7	Kendall Metz	4/19	Alexandra Barr	4/30	Gavin Dobbs
4/7	Eric Waskowicz	4/19	Maggie Corlett	4/30	Victoria Howard
4/8	Andrew Busker	4/19	Caroline Horwitz	4/30	Dick Rogers

Announcements!

Adult Education during April

Lenten Series

Monday, April 4: *How the Gifts of God are Wrapped: Grace, Covenants, Vows and Promises*, The Rev. Dr. Francis (Frank) H. Wade

Monday, April 11: *The Gifts and Art of Friendship in Christian Life*, The Rev. Martin Smith

Sunday Mornings at 10:15 am

April 3 — Joint Parent and Adult Forum: *Teaching Children to Pray*, The Rev. Heather VanDeventer and The Rev. Dr. David Gortner

April 10 — Adult Forum: *Report on the Young Adult Mission to Haiti*
— Inquirers' Class: *Holy Week*

April 17 -- No Classes: Palm Sunday: Intergenerational Event (palm crosses, butterflies and other Easter symbols)

April 24 -- No Classes: Easter Sunday: Festive Coffee Hour and Easter Egg Hunt

AgapéFeast

Join your fellow parishioners for the Agapé Feast following the Great Vigil on the evening of Saturday, April 23, in the Merrow Hall Auditorium. Sign-up sheets will be posted in the Foyer (the tower entrance) so you can let us know if you will be bringing a dish. Finger foods are suggested, both sweet and savory. Last year we had many more sweets than savory, so we're hoping for a few more savories this year. Please join us for this wonderful Grace Church tradition!

Easter Brass

Once again, our celebration at the Great Vigil of Easter will be enhanced by music with a brass quintet. If you would like to contribute to the Music Fund to help underwrite this, just send a check with "Music Fund" in the memo line. If you'd like your contribution to be listed "in honor of," "in thanksgiving for" or "in memory of," add that to the check – all such contributions will be listed in the bulletin for that service.

From the Library

The parish library has 1,741 books – 1,096 are non-fiction, 200 are fiction, 130 are biographies and 315 are reference books. There are 24 books in Spanish and 34 DVDs. Look for the library catalog in a blue binder on the counter. It has entries listed by title, subject and author. Meditation, prayer, Christian life, church history, theology, spirituality and spiritual life are the major topics in the collection. Bibliographies on many subjects are available in the bibliography binder. Visit the library to find answers to many of your theological questions. Books can be checked out for four weeks and DVDs for one week. Many thanks to Brad Bergmann for IT expertise and creation of the library data base!

Bring a Friend to Church...and Brunch

The St. Andrew's Guild, which helps welcome visitors and newcomers, will host a Spring brunch on Sunday, May 15, after the 9:00 am service. The brunch offers a great opportunity for parishioners to bring friends to a service and to enjoy some food and fellowship. We'll provide the food; you provide the friends. Watch for further details in the bulletin insert, on Facebook and on our website.

Reflections on a Spiritual Retreat, "Mending the Broken Heart"

The seeds of our Lenten Retreat on Saturday, February 26, were sown 25 years ago at Shrine Mont. At that time Brother Curtis Almquist of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) led a weekend retreat. Don Wills was present, and Don had a vision of one day having a spiritual retreat at Grace. After sharing his vision with Karen Wires after another retreat nine months ago, they shared this vision with Father Patrick.

They decided to ask Brother Curtis to come to Grace to lead a pre-Lenten retreat. Don said the following lines from the Gospel of St. Luke, epitomized the project. *"It is like a mustard seed which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, the birds of the air perched on its branches."* (13:19). Planned for 40 participants, 74 registered.

Attendees came from Grace, Christ Church, Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill (all in Alexandria), St. Mary's (Arlington), St. James' (Richmond), Washington National Cathedral, Grace School, Goodwin House and Fredericksburg. They were hungry and thirsty to learn about God's forgiveness and how to forgive others, releasing us and them from spiritual imprisonment.

Anne Boris shared the following comments, "Brother Curtis taught the need to slow down and let God love us, how to forgive, the value of tears and the value of silence. We slowly unwound and really heard what he was saying, which was both wise and practical. The style itself conveyed some of the message of slowing down and listening; it reminds me of a prayer included in his handouts, which says, 'that in heaven there shall be...no noise nor silence, but one equal to music.'"

On Friday afternoon, Brother Curtis gave a presentation to the clergy of Region IV. Father Malm said, "He encouraged us to pay attention to our spiritual lives in order to 'pace' ourselves with all of the demands of parish ministry." Father Patrick stated, "His talk to the clergy was for our spiritual and self-care. He was extremely helpful to us, though we had a short time with him." Brother Curtis also spoke at the Adult Forum and preached at the 9:00 and 11:15 am services on Sunday, rounding out a weekend of faith-filled inspiration.

The community present for the retreat took time to pray, meditate, journal, reflect, forgive and experience the power of forgiveness of others and themselves. The seeds for the retreat and vision began more than 20 years ago and culminated on Saturday, February 26; however, a new vision was created in the hearts and minds of parishioners to organize a second Pre-Lenten Spiritual Retreat during 2012.

Yes, forgiveness is powerful; Christians today are challenged with the interrogatory *"How many times are we to forgive?"* that the Apostle Peter asked Jesus. We are to forgive seventy times seven. Forgiveness is at the very core of our Christian Faith – to forgive and be forgiven.

— Don Wills, Retreat Committee

Parish Staff

Robert Malm Rector
(rector@gracealex.org)
Patrick Crerar Assistant Rector
(assistant.lector@gracealex.org)
Christine Byrnes Head of School
(office@graceschoolalex.org)
Thom Robertson Director of Music
(music.director@gracealex.org)
Julie Simonton Assistant for Family Ministries
(family.ministries@gracealex.org)
Charlotte Payne Wright Parish Administrator
(parish.administrator@gracealex.org)
Beth Wiggers Administrative Associate
(parish.office@gracealex.org)
Noelle Smoot Children's Chapel Coordinator
(childrens.chapel@gracealex.org)
Pedro Hernández Sexton

Vestry

Class of 2011

Alison Campbell Register
Rich Kelly Youth
Erica McFarquhar Treasurer
Howell Medley Senior Warden
Frank Waskowicz Junior Warden

Class of 2012

Amy Barron Fellowship
Lisa Bellantoni Education
Theresa Lewallen Evangelism
Robby Schrum Member-at-Large / TNT
Sharon Steele Outreach

Class of 2013

Peter Barnes Stewardship
Deborah Crabtree Worship
June Huber School Board
Lee Meeks Communications
Mary-Lacey Reuther Pastoral Care

Alternates

Jeff Solsby
Kemp Williams

Non-Vestry Coordinators

Heather Hurley Communications
Nancy Lorentz Education
Paul Bellatoni Evangelism
Gary Carter Fellowship
John Berry Outreach
Patt Sullivan-Perry Pastoral Care
Jean Reed Stewardship
Virginia Robinson TNT
Chad Eckles Worship
Lisa Medley Youth